

The People.

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DIALOGUE

UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN. {102}

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UNCLE SAM (with a tired look on him)—“Of many books there is no end,” saith the Book of Wisdom. Here is one more book, and on “Money,” too, by Arthur Kitson. Meseems Brother Kitson might have spared us this infliction.

BROTHER JONATHAN—Is his book, *An Outline Sketch of a Scientific Solution of the Money Question*, no good?

U.S.—It has much that is pretty good in it, but—

B.J.—But much that is bad.

U.S.—Well, see you here. At a time when our people get dumped upon them so much slush on the money question, it should be the part of wisdom to be careful not to strengthen any error, however much one may qualify it.

B.J.—Does Kitson neglect to do so?

U.S.—Yes. He virtually abets the mistaken cry for “more money!” He says, for instance, that free coinage would augment the volume of currency, and that conditions would be improved thereby, and the load upon labor lightened.

B.J.—I can’t find any fault with that! Don’t you want more money? Would you object to have your pockets full with clear, ringing silver dollars, instead of having them, as they are now, a beautiful vacuity? I am no gold bug, I ain’t; I would hang those rascally gold-bug money bags.

U.S.—You have just aired one of the fallacies of all the “More Money” criers. You imagine that if more money is coined it is to be coined straight into the people’s pockets.



UNCLE SAM & BROTHER JONATHAN

If it were, I might not object. But it won't.

B.J.—Well—hem—

U.S.—Suppose money were coined by the millions of billions, who will get it?

B.J.—Hem—er—

U.S.—You and I? The people?

B.J.—Er—Y—hem—

U.S.—The silver mine barons would have a picnic—

B.J.—Very well. They will set it floating. The richer the silver mine barons the better off the people. Don't you see they will buy so much more clothing, furniture, books, food; they would build so many more and larger houses for their residences. (Uncle Sam shakes his head, smiling blandly.) You need not sneer; they will invest in carriages and horses.

U.S.—Go on; you certainly have not yet exhausted the list of things they would buy.

B.J.—Indeed not! They would get more shoes, more hats, more flowers, more—

U.S.—More lackeys, more flunkeys, more footmen, more butlers, more private detectives, more concubines, more everything of the things the gold-bug bankers, whom you say you would like to hang, are now getting, eh?

B.J. begins to feel that he has again made a fool of himself.

U.S.—Oh Jonathan, oh Jonathan, if you did not weigh 250 pounds and more I would of all things delight in taking you over my knees, right side up, and give you a caning.

B.J. (bristling up indignantly)—You can't do it.

U.S.—I know I can't; but you deserve it all the same.

B.J. (trying to brace it out)—I'd like to know why.

U.S.—I'll tell you. These gold-bug bankers, for whom I have no more love than you, have held the very language that you now hold.

B.J.—They did?

U.S.—Yes; they also said some time ago: "If we are rich, everybody will profit by it; we would buy so much and make trade brisk." Now they are bursting in wealth. Is anybody the better for it except themselves?

B.J.—The rascals! No, we are all the worse for it.

U.S.—Nor are they the only ones who have treated the people thus scurvily. Do you remember the swill the protectionists dealt out to us?

B.J.—They did promise big things.

U.S.—Yes. They, too, said: “Pass laws that will enrich us, and we shall then, being so rich, invest plentifully in your goods, and make you all well off.” They, too, are now cracking their skins with fat, but the people?

B.J.—They are cracking theirs with leanness.

U.S.—It is so with the free traders in England, and will be so with them here, if they get their way, and it will be identically with the silver mine barons if they have theirs.

B.J. looks collapsed.

U.S. (taking Brother Jonathan by the left ear)—The only way for people to get wealthy is to get hold of the wealth directly. This thing of trying to get well off by boosting some one else into wealth and expecting him then to use it for our benefit is a dodge that won't wash no more. Nothing will now improve conditions or lighten any part of the load upon labor but the giving of the people full opportunity to work and to themselves pocket, not vicariously pocket, the full proceeds of their efforts. And that (giving Brother Jonathan's ear an extra twitch), and that is out of all question so long as the mines, the railroads, the factories, in short, the land and the instruments of production continue in private hands. Keep that in mind and quit making a fool of yourself shouting “More Money!”

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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